DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 696 EC 122 859

TITLE Special Education in the Netherlands, Docinform 317 E. (Replacing Docinform 221).
INSTITUTION Netherlands Ministry of Education and Sciences, The Hague.
PUB DATE Sep 78
NOTE 11p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Admission (School); Curriculum; Educational Finance; *Foreign Countries; *Handicapped Children; Program Evaluation; *Special Education; Teacher Education; Teacher Qualifications
IDENTIFIERS *Netherlands

ABSTRACT

The report briefly describes the special education of handicapped children in the Netherlands. The history of special education in that country is briefly reviewed. Aspects of present day special education in the Netherlands covered include admission, curriculum, staff qualifications and training, financial arrangements, and program evaluation. Statistical data is presented for such information as types of schools with decreasing attendance; types of schools with greatly increased attendance; and the numbers of schools, pupils, and teaching staff for 18 categories of exceptionality. (DLS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED181696

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

(replacing Docinform 221)

Docinform 317 E

CENTRAL DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT

Ministry of Education and Science

The Hague

September 1978

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

W. F. de Regt

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

E C/228859

CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION 5

HISTORICAL SUMMARY 5

PRESENT SITUATION 6

General 6

Statistical data 7

Admission 10

Curriculum 10

Staff qualifications and training 11

Financial arrangements 11

Inspection 12

SOURCES 12

INTRODUCTION

In the Netherlands, special education for handicapped children originally reflected care for the disabled of a type that was aimed at protecting the disabled person from society and segregating him for his own safety if necessary. It took almost a hundred years for the view to gain general acceptance that handicapped people were part of society and that what they needed was not protection but assistance in finding their place in the community.

An education appropriate to the needs of handicapped people is one form this assistance can take and it is designed to enable the disabled to develop their capabilities to the full and use them to contribute to the needs of society in return. The handicapped person is therefore seen not as the object of care but as a subject in the life of the community.

As one would expect, this type of education was at first provided by church bodies and lay organizations which felt called to do so from a sense of religious and/or social commitment. When, at a later stage, it was recognized that the education of handicapped children was a matter of general concern, it was an obvious step for the government to become involved. Education appropriate to the needs of handicapped children is termed "special education".

HISTORICAL SUMMARY

Education for handicapped children began in 1790 when a school for the deaf and dumb was set up as part of the non-denominational organization now known as the Royal Institute for the Deaf. The first Catholic and Protestant establishments of this kind were opened in 1840 and 1888 respectively. The earliest non-denominational school for the blind was opened in 1808 while facilities for the physically handicapped have been in existence since 1882. The first day school for ESN (educationally subnormal) children was established in 1896, though the first boarding establishment for these children had already been in existence for five years.

Special education was given legal recognition for the first time in the Primary Education Act of 1920, and in 1923 schools for deaf and dumb, blind, ESN and partially-hearing children were organized under the name of "special primary schools", a term which was extended to include schools for disturbed and physically handicapped children in 1930.

A new regulation came into force in 1949 in which twelve types of special school were recognized for children with mental or sensory handicaps and four types of school for children who are not handicapped but are unable to attend an ordinary primary school because their parents' livelihood is of an itinerant nature (bargees, gypsies, fairground operators). This was followed by a new Royal Decree in 1967, based on the 1920 Act, recognizing four additional types of special primary school, special secondary education and nursery departments at certain special schools.

The establishment of schools for children with multiple handicaps has been possible since August 1977.

PRESENT SITUATION

General

Special education in the Netherlands, which is provided in separate schools, is governed by the 1967 Special Education Decree, covering the following types of special education:

a) schools for partially-hearing children;
b) schools for deaf children;
c) schools for children with severe speech defects not included in a) or b);
d) schools for blind children;
e) schools for partially-sighted children;
f) schools for physically-handicapped children;
g) schools for children in convalescent homes;
h) schools for delicate children;
i) schools for epileptic children;
j) schools for mentally-handicapped children;
k) schools for severely mentally-handicapped children;
l) schools attached to establishments and designated institutions for ESN children under the provisions of Section 7 of the Act of 27 April 1884;
m) schools for severely maladjusted children;
n) schools attached to institutions for children in care under the provisions of Section 5 of the Child Care and Protection Act;
o) schools attached to institutes for disturbed children;
p) schools for children with learning and behavioural difficulties;
q) schools for children with multiple handicaps;
r) schools for bargees' children;
s) schools for travelling (gypsy) children;
t) schools for children of fairground operators.

Special schools usually have a main department providing primary education for children from the age of six or thereabouts, but they may also have nursery or secondary departments attached. In addition there are a number of special schools providing secondary education only.
Children are normally accepted into the nursery departments from the age of three while the age at which children enter the main departments is the same as that for ordinary primary schools.

Pupils generally leave special schools at the age of seventeen but the inspector may annually give permission for a pupil to stay on for one more year, up to a maximum of three years.

Schools for itinerant children likewise have main and nursery departments but they do not have secondary departments. The children have to leave the schools at the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of fifteen. For the children of fairground operators there are mobile schools which travel with the fairs.

Statistical data

The tables below (from which schools for itinerant children are excluded) show changes in attendance figures over an eight year period. The last table shows the number of schools, pupils and teaching staff as at 16 January 1978.

The number of children in special schools has increased, both in absolute and relative terms, in recent years.
The total number of pupils in special schools was 71,500 in 1967 and had risen to 89,400 in 1976, representing 4.79 per cent of the total number of pupils in both ordinary primary schools and special schools in 1967 and 5.8 per cent of the same group in 1976. As the following tables show, however, the numbers have not grown at the same rate in all types of school and attendance at some has in fact decreased.

Schools with decreasing attendance

type of school for:	number of pupils 1968	1972	1976	drop in % 1968 - 1976
delicate children	1,874	1,941	1,793	4
epileptic children	369	367	332	10
mentally-handicapped children	36,779	35,836	34,397	7
children in institutions under the Child Care and Protection Act	1,540	1,084	294	81

A number of other types of school has experienced a slight growth as the following table shows.

Schools with a slight growth in attendance

type of school for:	number of pupils 1968	1972	1976	growth in % 1968 - 1976
deaf children	1,313	1,356	1,395	6
partially-hearing children	2,521	2,737	2,807	11
blind children	529	483	597	13
partially-sighted children	532	571	552	4
severely mentally-handicapped children	5,944	6,253	6,124	3
children in establishments and designated institutions for ESN children under the Act of 27 April 1884 (Section 7)	1,325	1,368	1,480	12

The following types of school have experienced a large increase.

Types of school with greatly increased attendance

type of school for:	number of pupils 1968	1972	1976	growth in % 1968 - 1976
children with severe speech defects	107	163	224	109
physically-handicapped children	2,605	3,404	3,668	41
children in convalescent homes	627	597	1,167	86
severely maladjusted children	1,829	2,801	3,579	96
children in institutes for disturbed children	421	574	705	67
children with learning and behavioural difficulties	12,271	18,694	24,781	102

The following statistics illustrate the situation in special education as at 16 January 1978.

The position as at 16 January 1978

type of school for:	number of schools	number of pupils	number of teaching staff
mentally-handicapped children	282 [1]	33148	2461
severely mentally-handicapped children	93	6633	578
children with learning and behavioural difficulties	251	27642	2036
deaf children	13	1418	201
partially-hearing children	30	3187	314
children with severe speech defects	1	188	19
blind children	8	626	66
partially-sighted children	5	492	65
physically-handicapped children	34	3980	406
children in convalescent homes	20	1299	123
delicate children	18	1589	117
epileptic children	3	298	27
severely maladjusted children	52	3678	395
children in institutions under the Child Care and Protection Act	3	183	6
children in institutes for disturbed children	9	728	70
bargees' children	15	1538	80
travelling (gypsy) children	41	3146	219
children of travelling showmen	7	132	10

1) including schools for mentally-handicapped children with a department for the severely mentally-handicapped.

Admission

The Compulsory Education Act requires handicapped children to attend school like all other children in so far as their condition and circumstances (e.g. lack of fixed abode) will allow. "Compulsory education" in this country means "compulsory school attendance". Attendance ceases to be compulsory after ten years and in any event at the end of the school year in which a pupil reaches the age of sixteen.

If a child is not able to attend an ordinary primary school because of his or her handicap, the parents may apply for admission to a special school if there is one that caters for the handicap concerned. It is not compulsory to send a child to a special school, however, and an application for admission will only be granted after an admissions committee has arranged for the child to be examined and has decided that he is suitable for the special school concerned. The committee consists of the head of the school to which admission is being sought, a medical specialist and psychologist or educationalist: there may also be other members. The examination is repeated after the pupil has been in the school for two years or when he is eligible for transfer to another department or school, such as a special secondary school.

While the minimum age of admission to most nursery departments is three, children with learning difficulties (backward children) may not be admitted until they have reached the age of four and a half. The age for admission to main departments is the same as that to ordinary primary schools.

Curriculum

The 1967 Special Education Decree lays down regulations relating to the curriculum for public education (i.e. provided by central or local government) and guidelines for private education (denominational and other), specifying the number of hours and the subjects to be taught.

A minimum of 1,000 hours' teaching per year must be given in the main departments of special primary schools, although schools for itinerant children need only give 880 hours per year. There should not be more than 5½ contact hours per day, except in the case of special secondary education. The nursery departments give at least 880 hours per year and must not exceed 26 hours per week and five hours per day.

In private education, a maximum of 120 hours may be devoted to subjects of a primarily religious or humanist nature.

The following subjects are compulsory in most main departments of special schools: reading, writing, arithmetic, Dutch, Dutch history, geography, road safety, nature study, singing, art, P.E. (physical education), craft and needlework. In addition, special secondary departments or schools teach any two of the following:
French, German, English, mathematics or commerce; optional teaching subjects are one or more of: history, agriculture, horticulture, home economics, Frisian, Spanish or Esperanto.

There is a separate curriculum for schools for severely mentally-handicapped children and schools attached to institutions or establishments for ESN children. These schools teach road safety, nature study, singing, art, P.E., craft and needlework. Art is not taught in schools for blind children.

Staff qualifications and training

Teachers in special schools are recruited from those trained as ordinary primary school teachers and there is no separate training. All future teachers are made aware of the purpose of special education and may, if they wish, do their compulsory teaching practice at a special school. Teachers at special schools - or anyone seeking such an appointment - may supplement their basic training by taking a number of part-time voluntary courses on a variety of specialized aspects of special education.

All candidates for a permanent appointment in a special school must hold a certificate as a fully qualified primary school teacher and be qualified to teach P.E. and craft or needlework. Further qualifications may be an advantage for an appointment in a special school.

Women teachers who are qualified as nursery-school heads are also eligible for appointment as teachers in the nursery departments of special schools and in schools for severely mentally-handicapped children, while nursery-school teachers may be appointed on a temporary basis.

Teachers in special schools receive higher salaries than those in ordinary primary schools and there are additional allowances for those who hold more than the minimum qualifications or who have followed a special course.

Financial arrangements

No fees are charged at special schools but parents are normally responsible for board and lodging where appropriate. Parents may be eligible for a refund, from the municipality where they live, of travelling expenses for children attending special schools, but some municipalities organize the transport of handicapped children themselves. Charges for board and lodging are not usually related to whether a handicapped child is attending a special school, but are included in the cost of the treatment the child is undergoing, for which it has been placed in an institution.
If this is the case, the charges fall under the social security arrangement.

The state makes a contribution towards the cost of board and lodging for bargees' children who have to stay ashore temporarily in order to attend school.

The government finances all special education, whether given in public or private schools (as defined above), provided that the schools concerned are of a certain size and comply with a number of legal requirements.

Inspection

The inspection of special schools is carried out on behalf of the Minister of Education and Science by the Chief Inspector for Special Education (categoriaal hoofdinspecteur Buitengewoon Onderwijs). His department consists of twelve inspectorates, one of which is a primary education inspectorate responsible for the schools for itinerant children.

The inspectorate is primarily concerned with seeing that the statutory regulations are observed but also acts as the channel for supplying the Minister with information and for making recommendations. The inspectorate has an intermediary role to play as a result of its position between the Minister and the classroom; hence it can contribute to the framing of educational policy and has the task of encouraging that sector of education with which it is concerned.

SOURCES

1. Besluit buitengewoon onderwijs 1967 (Special Education Decree 1967), 3rd revised ed., The Hague, Publishing Department of the Dutch Government Printing Office, 1973, pp. 115 (Ministry of Education and Science, Wetten en bestuursmaatregelen onderwijs en wetenschappen, 55).
2. Statistiek van het buitengewoon onderwijs (Statistics on special education). The Hague, Publishing Department of the Dutch Government Printing Office (Central Bureau of Statistics).
3. Nota speciaal onderwijs (Special Education Memorandum), The Hague, Publishing Department of the Dutch Government Printing Office, 1977 (Ministry of Education and Science, Appendix, Proceedings II, 1976/77, no. 14.415, 1-2.
   Title on the cover, Speciaal onderwijs: beleid voor korte en vragen voor lange termijn (Special education: short-term policy and long-term questions)).